

The one time that the minority leader has spoken out on this issue has been to condemn the Speaker of the House, the one time. The Nation has been preoccupied by White House scandals all year, and the minority leader's only response has been to blame the Speaker. That fits in very nicely with the White House strategy of spin, the whole spin, and nothing but the spin.

Clearly, they are testing the proposition that you cannot fool all the people all the time. Mr. Speaker, you cannot fool all the people all the time. And the American people have grown very weary of this White House's efforts to distract them from the truth.

We are all damaged by the White House efforts to delay this investigation, to destroy the investigator, and to deny everything to the media.

The minority leader said in his speech today, and I quote, "Ideally, we are able to put aside our partisan interests and consider 'the people's business,' if not with a blank slate, at least with an open mind."

Can the leader really believe that he has approached these issues with an open mind when the only person he blames in the very White House scandals is the Speaker of the House?

I urge the minority leader to join us in finding out the truth. He should be calling for the truth. Let us put this partisanship aside and look soberly at the very serious allegations that have beset this White House. No man is above the law, and the American people deserve to know the truth.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. STUPAK. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to proceed out of order with my 5-minute Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Michigan?

There was no objection.

PARTIES BECOME LIGHTNING ROD OF PARTISANSHIP

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. STUPAK) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. STUPAK. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for letting me proceed at this time, because I did want to address what the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY) was speaking of, because, earlier today, I came down to the House floor and I spoke of the Speaker, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. GINGRICH), and his remarks before GOPAC, and I hope to do it in a way that does not bring any disservice to the House or any personal malice toward anyone.

Look at what is going on here because of comments on both sides. We have all become a lightning rod of partisanship around here. It seems to me, about a week ago, it was the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. GINGRICH) who began the personal attacks on the President. While I am a Democrat, a member of

on the minority party, I think every member of this country should be outraged. You have an ongoing investigation. So let us let the investigation proceed.

It seems to me the Speaker some time ago said we should all hold our breath and step backward and let this thing play out. But when we got before a GOPAC dinner, the cash cow of the Republican Party, we just could not seem to leave it go. The claim was that the President is obstructing justice.

We can get up here all night and say all kinds of things about the President and this administration, but let us put forth the evidence; and, by evidence, I mean credible evidence.

By stating or by starting attacks on the President in a partisan manner before a partisan group like GOPAC, I am afraid the Speaker has shown that he cannot lead the House in a fair and impartial review of any inquiry that may take place.

I do not know what the President's guilt or innocence is or whatever it may be in this matter, but what I do know is that, if we stick to the facts and let it properly proceed, and if we rely on, as our constitutional oath requires us to do, credible evidence, credibly submitted to a trier of fact, then maybe we can get to the bottom of this.

Unfortunately, it appears that the Speaker has already reviewed the alleged facts. If he has reviewed the alleged facts, he obviously has made a prejudgment, and he has made himself a judge and jury.

So then I must ask, where is this evidence? Where are these alleged facts? Bring them forth. If he has a report, if the report has been filed with the Speaker's office, bring them forth so all of us in the House have an opportunity to see it. Make it available to at least the Committee on the Judiciary who, by law, has a right to review any inquiry.

Mr. Speaker, I wish we would just stick to the facts of the case and not what GOPAC wants to hear but to the facts of the case. But, instead, the Speaker and, as even Roll Call, I mean it is supposed to be a nonpartisan paper, even Roll Call says, "Shame in the Making."

That is exactly what we have when we have investigations and Members coming up here and, if I can use the majority leader's words, put spin on what is going on. Let us not bring shame to the House, but let us have the responsibility to lead and not mislead the House or this country.

The Speaker of the House should be a statesman without prejudging any type of inquiry which may or may not even occur. Instead, I am afraid we have become a lightning rod.

I hate to remind the House, but just over a year ago we had to reprimand the Speaker and fine him approximately \$300,000 for bringing shame and disrespect to this House. Five out of eight ethics charges he was found re-

sponsible for by our own Committee on Ethics. Do we really want to go down this shameful road once again?

I ask that we not bring shame and disrespect to the House by personal attacks. I would hope the Speaker would recuse himself from any participation in any House inquiry.

I have been there. I have done investigation of political people. But you have to do it in an objective manner and not necessarily before the press. You can, and we should, do an investigation, and let the investigation proceed.

But, I mean, even, where have we gone with this whole thing? Even the Committee on Government Reform and Oversight underneath the leadership of the majority party, we have a Privacy Act in this country that the Members of Congress are exempt from. Yet, when given tapes of a personal conversation of a witness who refused to appear, the Privacy Act suddenly did not apply, and the tapes were leaked to the news media, and the personal conversations of this individual were released to the news media.

Is that not abuse of office? Have we not used that office, at least that chairman did, to release tapes of private conversations? Maybe not in violation of the Privacy Act because he was a Member of Congress, but certainly in violation of the spirit and intent of the law. That is what we are doing here with these investigations certainly.

Then when the tapes were given to the oversight committee, they were warned in a letter not to release the tapes. There was sensitive private information. Yet, we still do that, and we hide behind the office of which we hold, a great honor given to us by the American people but, yet, we use it for our benefit.

I would hope that any investigations proceed in a professional manner and stick to the facts.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SAXTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. SAXTON addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. RIGGS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. RIGGS addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)